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CALIFORNIA:

THE WONDER OF THE AGE.

A BOOK FOR EVERY ONE GOING TO OR HAVING AN INTEREST IN

THAT GOLDEN REGION;

BEING THE REPORT OF

THOMAS BUTLER KING,

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENT IN AND FOR CALIFORNIA.

"In the latter end of the year 1545 the Mines of the Cerro de Potosi were accidentally discovered. According to the account of Herrera, the discovery was owing to an Indian hunter, Diego Huallca, who, in pulling up a shrub, observed filaments of pure white silver about the roots. On examination, the mass was found to be enormous and a very great part of the population was thereby drawn to the spot and employed in extracting the metal. A city soon sprang up, though in a district of unusual sterility. The mountain was perforated on all sides, and the produce in a few of the first years exceeded whatever has been recorded of the richest mines in the world. The amount of gold annually produced in America, between the years 1492 and 1840, was £52,000,000.

W. JACOB, ON THE PRECIOUS METALS.

NEW YORK.

WILLIAM GOWANS, 178 FULTON STREET

1850.

IMPORTANT AND RARE BOOKS

FOR SALE BY

WILLIAM GOWANS,

AT 178 FULTON STREET, NEW YORK.

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This book is famous as having been the first Commentary upon the Scriptures published after the invention of printing. This appears to have been given to the world about 40 years after the invention of the art. It is a great literary curiosity.

BURNEY, CHARLES. A General History of Music, from the earliest ages to the present period. To which is prefixed a Dissertation on the Music of the Ancients. 4 vols. 4to. Calf, fine, clean copy; plates. $50.00. London, 1776.

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MUSEUM OF FOREIGN LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART. Many engravings. 42 vols. Thick 8vo., half bound and cornered. (*A complete set.*) $55.00. Philadelphia, 1822 and 1842.

HUMBOLDT, A. DE. Vues des Cordillères, et Monumens des Peuples Indigènes de l'Amerique. 62 *Magnificent colored plates—there ought to have been 68—six have been lost.* Great folio size. $30.00. Paris, 1810.

ROUSSEAU, J. J. Collection Complète des Œuvres. 17 vols. 4to. Calf, numerous fine plates. $38.00. Geneva, 1782.

BOYLE, ROBERT. The Whole Works of. To which is prefixed, a Life of the Author. 6 vols. 4to. Calf. Portrait. $30.00. London, 1772.

GROSE, FRANCIS. The Antiquities of England and Wales; with numerous curious plates. 8 vols. 4to. Calf. $25.00. London, N. D.

HARLEIAN MISCELLANY, or a Collection of Scarce, Curious, and Entertaining Pamphlets and Tracts, as well in Manuscript as in Print, found in the late Earl of Oxford's Library, interspersed with Historical, Political, and Critical Notes, with a Table of the Contents and Alphabetical Index. 8 vols. 4to. $20.00. London, 1746.

SHAKSPEARE, W. Traduit de l'Anglois, Au Roi. 20 vols. 8vo. Sheep, gilt. $20.00 Paris, 1776.

This French translation of Shakspeare appears to have been published by the aid of subscriptions among the subscribers are to be found the names of the Kings of France and England, besides the most distinguished men of France.

SHAKESPEARE, W. Tragedie di Shakspeare. Tradotte da Michael Leoni (with a curious Italian engraved head of Shakspeare). 14 vols. 8vo. Paper $8.00. Verona, 1819.

ZUINGERUS, THEOD. Theatri Humanæ Vitæ. 6 vols. Folio *Hogskin binding.* $24.00. 1610

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W. Jacob, on the Precious Metals.

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May 1913

REPORT

ON

CALIFORNIA,

ITS POPULATION, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTS, PUBLIC DOMAIN, AND METALLIC AND MINERAL WEALTH.

WASHINGTON, *March 22d*, 1850.

SIR,—In obedience to your instructions, dated the 3d of April last, I proceeded to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and arrived at San Francisco on the 4th day of June.

The steamer in which I took passage was the first conveyance that reached California with intelligence of the inauguration of President Taylor, and the appointment of his Cabinet, and that Congress had failed to aid the Executive in providing a government for the people of that territory. The greatest anxiety was naturally felt and manifested to ascertain the cause of this neglect on the part of the Government of the United States, and what steps duty to themselves required them to take, in the painful and embarrassing position in which they were placed for their protection and welfare.

A brief sketch of their position will explain the cause of this anxiety.

The discovery of the gold mines had attracted a very large number of citizens of the United States to that territory, who had never been accustomed to any other than American law, administered by American courts. There they found their rights of property and person subject to the uncertain, and frequently most oppressive, operations of laws written in a language they did not understand, and founded on principles, in many respects, new to them. They complained that the alcaldes, or judges, most of whom had been appointed or elected before the immigration had commenced, were not lawyers by education or profession ; and, being Americans, they were, of course, unacquainted with the laws of Mexico, or the principles of the civil law on which they are founded.

As our own laws, except for the collection of revenue, the transmission of the mails, and the establishment of post-offices, had not been extended over that territory, the laws of Mexico, as they existed at the conclusion of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, regulating the relations of the inhabitants of California with each other, necessarily remained in force ;* yet, there was not a single volume contain-

* See American Insurance Company et al. *vs.* Canter, 1st Peters's Supreme Court Reports, 542.

ing those laws, as far as I know or believe, in the whole territory, except, perhaps, in the Governor's office, at Monterey.

The magistrates, therefore, could not procure them, and the administration of justice was, necessarily, as unequal and fluctuating as the opinions of the judges were conflicting and variable.

There were no fee-bills to regulate costs, and, consequently, the most cruel exactions, in many instances, were practised.

The greatest confusion prevailed respecting titles to property, and the decision of suits, involving the most important rights, and very large sums of money, depended upon the dictum of the judge.

The sale of the territory by Mexico to the United States had necessarily cut off or dissolved the laws regulating the granting or procuring titles to land; and, as our own land-laws had not been extended over it, the people were compelled to receive such titles as were offered to them, without the means of ascertaining whether they were valid or not.

Litigation was so expensive and precarious, that injustice and oppression were frequently endured, rather than resort to so uncertain a remedy.

Towns and cities were springing into existence—many of them without charters or any legal right to organize municipal authorities, or to tax property or the citizens, for the establishment of a police, the erection of prisons, or providing any of those means for the protection of life and property which are so necessary in all civil communities, and especially among a people mostly strangers to each other.

Nearly one million and a half of dollars had been paid into the custom-houses, as duties on imported goods, before our revenue laws had been extended over the country; and the people complained bitterly that they were thus heavily taxed without being provided with a government for their protection, or laws which they could understand, or allowed the right to be represented in the councils of the nation.

While anxiously waiting the action of Congress, oppressed and embarrassed by this state of affairs, and feeling the pressing necessity of applying such remedies as were in their power and circumstances seemed to justify, they resolved to substitute laws of their own for the existing system, and to establish tribunals for their proper and faithful administration.

In obedience, therefore, to the extraordinary exigencies of their condition, the people of the city of San Francisco elected members to form a Legislature, and clothed them with full power to pass laws.

The communities of Sonoma and of Sacramento city followed the example.

Thus were three legislative bodies organized; the two most distant being only one hundred and thirty miles apart.

Other movements of the kind were threatened, and doubtless would have followed in other sections of the territory, had they not been arrested by the formation of a State government.

While the people of California were looking to Congress for a Territorial government, it was quite evident that such an organization was daily becoming less suited to their condition, which was entirely different from that of any of the territories out of which the new States of the Union had been formed.

Those territories had been at first slowly and sparsely peopled by a few hunters

and farmers, who penetrated the wilderness, or traversed the prairies in search of game or a new home; and, when thus gradually their population warranted it, a government was provided for them. They, however, had no foreign commerce, nor anything beyond the ordinary pursuits of agriculture and the various branches of business which usually accompany it, to induce immigration within their borders. Several years were required to give them sufficient population and wealth to place them in a condition to require or enable them to support a State government.

Not so with California. The discovery of the vast metallic and mineral wealth in her mountains had already attracted to her, in the space of twelve months, more than one hundred thousand people; an extensive commerce had sprung up with China, the ports of Mexico on the Pacific, Chili, and Australia.

Hundreds of vessels from the Atlantic ports of the Union, freighted with our manufactures and agricultural products, and filled with our fellow-citizens, had arrived, or were on their passage round Cape Horn; so that in the month of June last there were more than three hundred sea-going vessels in the port of San Francisco.

California has a border on the Pacific of 10 degrees of latitude, and several important harbors which have never been surveyed; nor is there a buoy, a beacon, a light-house, or a fortification on the whole coast.

There are no docks for the repair of national or mercantile vessels nearer than New York, a distance of some twenty thousand miles round Cape Horn.

All these things, together with the proper regulations of the gold region, the quicksilver mines, the survey and disposition of the public lands, the adjustment of land titles, the establishment of a mint and marine hospitals, required the immediate formation of a more perfect civil government than California then had, and the fostering care of Congress and the Executive.

California had, as it were by magic, become a State of great wealth and power. One short year had given her a commercial importance but little inferior to that of the most powerful of the old States. She had passed her minority at a single bound, and might justly be regarded as fully entitled to take her place as an equal among her sisters of the Union.

When, therefore, the reality became known to the people of that Territory that the government had done nothing to relieve them from the evils and embarrassments under which they were suffering, and seeing no probability of any change on the subject which divided Congress, they adopted, with most unexampled unanimity and promptitude, the only course which lay open to them—the immediate formation of a State government.

They were induced to take this step not only for the reason that it promised the most speedy remedy for present difficulties, but because the great and rapidly growing interests of the Territory demanded it; and all reflecting men saw, at a glance, that it ought not to be any longer, and could not, under any circumstances, be much longer postponed.

They not only considered themselves best qualified, but that they had the right to decide, as far as they were concerned, the embarrassing question which was shaking the Union to its centre, and had thus far deprived them of a regularly organized civil government. They believed that, in forming a constitution, they

had a right to establish or prohibit slavery, and that in their action as a State, they would be sustained by the North and the South.

They were not unmindful of the fact, that while Northern statesmen had contended that Congress has power to prohibit slavery in the Territories, they had always admitted that the States of the Union had the right to abolish or establish it at pleasure.

On the other hand, Southern statesmen had almost unanimously contended that Congress has not the constitutional power to *prohibit* slavery in the Territories, because they have not the power to *establish* it; but that the people, in forming a government for themselves, have the right to do either. If Congress can rightfully do one, they can certainly do the other.

This is the doctrine put forth by Mr. Calhoun, in his celebrated Resolutions of 1847, introduced into the Senate of the United States, among which is the following:

"*Resolved*, That it is a fundamental principle in our political creed, that a people in forming a constitution have the unconditional right to form and adopt the Government which they may think best calculated to secure their liberty, prosperity, and happiness; and in conformity thereto, no other condition is imposed by the Federal Constitution on a State, in order to be admitted into this Union, except that its constitution shall be 'republican,' and that the imposition of any other by Congress would not only be in violation of the Constitution, but in direct conflict with the principle on which our political system rests."

President Polk, in his annual message, dated 5th December, 1848, uses the following language:—

"The question is believed to be rather abstract than practical, whether slavery ever can or would exist in any portion of the acquired territory, even if it were left to the option of the slaveholding States themselves. From the nature of the climate and productions, in much the larger portion of it, it is certain it could never exist; and in the remainder, the probabilities are that it would not.

"But however this may be, the question, involving as it does a principle of equality of rights of the separate and several States, as equal co-partners in the Confederacy, should not be disregarded.

"In organizing governments over these Territories, no duty imposed on Congress by the Constitution requires that they should legislate on the subject of slavery, while their power to do so is not only seriously questioned, but denied by many of the soundest expounders of that instrument.

"Whether Congress shall legislate or not, the people of the acquired Territories, when assembled in convention to form State constitutions, will possess the sole and exclusive power to determine for themselves whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits."

The people of California, therefore, acting in conformity with the views thus expressed, and what seemed to be the generally admitted opinion in the States, had every reason to suppose, and did suppose, that by forming a constitution for themselves, and deciding this question in accordance with their own views and interests, they would be received with open arms by all parties.

In taking this step they proceeded with all the regularity which has ever characterized the American people in discharging the great and important duties of self-government.

As already stated, I arrived at San Francisco on the morning of the fourth of June.

The steamer in which I was a passenger did not stop at Monterey; I therefore did not see General Riley, nor had I any communication with him until about the middle of the month, when he came to San Francisco. A few days after my arrival, his State Constitution, *dated the third of June*, was received.

The people acted in accordance with what they believed to be the views of Congress, and conformably to the recommendations of the proclamation; and proceeded, on the day appointed, to elect members to a convention, for the purpose of forming a constitution, to be regularly submitted to the people, for their ratification or rejection, and, if approved, to be presented to Congress, with a prayer for the admission of California, as a State, into the Union.

I desire here to make a brief and emphatic reply to the various unjust and most extraordinary accusations and insinuations which have been made respecting the movements of the people of California in forming their State government.

I had no secret instructions, verbal or written, from the President, or any one else, what to say to the people of California on the subject of slavery; nor was it ever hinted or intimated to me that I was expected to attempt to influence their action in the slightest degree on that subject. That I never did, the people of California will bear me witness. In that Territory there was none of the machinery of party or of the press; and it is even more absurd to suppose that any *strict influences*, for or against slavery, could have been used there, than it would be to believe that they could be successfully employed in Maryland or Georgia.

I therefore declare all assertions and insinuations, that I was secretly instructed to, or that I did in any way, attempt to influence the people of California to exclude slavery from their territory, to be without foundation.

The election of delegates to the convention proceeded regularly in pursuance of the proposed mode of holding it, and as far as I am informed, no questions were asked whether a candidate was a Whig or a Democrat, or whether he was from the North or the South. The only object seemed to be, to find competent men who were willing to make the sacrifice of time which a proper discharge of their duties would require.

As soon after my arrival at San Francisco as the arrangements of General Smith would permit, I proceeded with him to the interior of the country, for the purpose of examining the gold region, and other interesting and important portions of it. I did not return until the 16th of August. The elections had taken place when I was in the mountains. I was taken ill on the 20th of that month, and was confined to my bed and my room more than two months.

The convention met on the 1st of September. So it will be seen that I was not present where any election was held, nor had I anything to do with selecting or bringing out candidates; and my illness is sufficient proof that I did not, and could not, had I been disposed, exercise any influence in the convention, which was sitting one hundred and thirty miles from where I was.

Some intimations or assertions, as I am informed, have been thrown out that the

South was not fairly represented in the convention. I am told by two of the members of Congress elect from California, who were members of the convention, that of the thirty-seven delegates designated in General Riley's proclamation, sixteen were from slaveholding, ten from the non-slaveholding States, and eleven who were citizens of California under the Mexican government, and that ten of those eleven came from districts below 36° 30′. So that there were in the convention twenty-six of the thirty-seven members from the slave-holding States, and from places South of the Missouri compromise line.

It appears, on the journal of the convention, that the clause in the constitution excluding slavery passed unanimously.

I now proceed to give you the result of my inquiries, observations, and reflections respecting the population, climate, soil, productions—the general character of grants of land from Mexico—the extent and condition of the public domain—the commercial resources and prospects—the mineral and metallic wealth of California.

POPULATION.

Humboldt, in his Essay on New Spain, states the population of Upper California, in 1802, to have consisted of—

Converted Indians	15,562
Other classes	1,300
	16,862

Alexander Forbes, in his history of Upper and Lower California, published in London, in 1839, states the number of converted Indians in the former to have been, in 1831 | 18,683
Of all other classes, at | 4,342
| | 23,025

He expresses the opinion that this number had not varied much up to 1835, and the probability is, there was very little increase in the white population until the emigrants from the United States began to enter the country in 1838.

They increased, from year to year, so that, in 1846, Colonel Fremont had little difficulty in calling to his standard some five hundred fighting men.

At the close of the war with Mexico, it was supposed that there were, including discharged volunteers, from ten to fifteen thousand Americans and Californians, exclusive of converted Indians, in the Territory. The immigration of American citizens in 1849, up to the 1st of January last, was estimated at eighty thousand—of foreigners, twenty thousand.

The population of California may therefore be safely set down at 115,000 at the commencement of the present year.

It is quite impossible to form anything like an accurate estimate of the number of Indians in the Territory. Since the commencement of the war, and especially since the discovery of gold in the mountains, their number at the missions and in the valleys near the coast has very much diminished. In fact, the whole race seems to be rapidly disappearing.

The remains of a vast number of villages in all the valleys of the Sierra Nevada, and among the foot-hills of that range of mountains, show that at no distant day

there must have been a numerous population where there is not now an Indian to be seen. There are a few still retained in the service of the old Californians, but these do not amount to more than a few thousand in the whole Territory. It is said there are large numbers of them in the mountains and valleys about the head-waters of the San Joaquin, along the western base of the Sierra, and in the northern part of the Territory, and that they are hostile. A number of Americans were killed by them during the last summer in attempting to penetrate high up the rivers in search of gold; they also drove one or two parties from Trinity river. They have, in several instances, attacked parties coming from or returning to Oregon, in the section of country which the lamented Captain Warner was examining when he was killed.

It is quite impossible to form any estimate of the number of these Mountain Indians. Some suppose there are as many as three hundred thousand in the territory, but I should not be inclined to believe that there can be one third of that number. It is quite evident that they are hostile, and that they ought to be chastised for the murders already committed.

The small bands with whom I met, scattered through the lower portions of the foot-hills of the Sierra, and in the valleys between them and the coast, seemed to be almost the lowest grade of human beings. They live chiefly on acorns, roots, insects, and the kernel of the pine burr—occasionally they catch fish and game. They use the bow and arrow, but are said to be too lazy and effeminate to make successful hunters. They do not appear to have the slightest inclination to cultivate the soil, nor do they even attempt it—as far as I could obtain information —except when they are induced to enter the service of the white inhabitants. They have never pretended to hold any interest in the soil, nor have they been treated by the Spanish or American immigrants as possessing any.

The Mexican Government never treated with them for the purchase of land, or the relinquishment of any claim to it whatever. They are lazy, idle to the last degree, and, although they are said to be willing to give their services to any one who will provide them with blankets, beef, and bread, it is with much difficulty they can be made to perform labor enough to reward their employers for these very limited means of comfort.

Formerly, at the missions, those who were brought up and instructed by the priests, made very good servants. Many of these now attached to families seem to be faithful and intelligent. But those who are at all in a wild and uncultivated state, are most degraded objects of filth and idleness.

It is possible that Government might, by collecting them together, teach them, in some degree, the arts and habits of civilization; but, if we may judge of the future from the past, they will disappear from the face of the earth as the settlements of the whites extend over the country. A very considerable military force will be necessary, however, to protect the emigrants in the northern and southern portions of the territory.

CLIMATE.

I now come to consider the climate. The climate of California is so remarkable in its periodical changes, and for the long continuance of the wet and dry seasons,

dividing, as they do, the year into about two equal parts, which have a most peculiar influence on the labor applied to agriculture and the products of the soil, and, in fact, connect themselves so inseparably with all the interests of the country, that I deem it proper briefly to mention the causes which produce these changes, and which, it will be seen, as this report proceeds, must exercise a controlling influence on the commercial prosperity and resources of the country.

It is a well-established theory, that the currents of air under which the earth passes in its diurnal revolutions follow the line of the sun's greatest attraction. These currents of air are drawn towards this line from great distances on each side of it; and as the earth revolves from west to east, they blow from northeast and southeast, meeting, and of course causing a calm, on the line.

Thus, when the sun is directly, in common parlance, over the equator, in the month of March, these currents of air blow from some distance north of the tropic of Cancer, and south of the tropic of Capricorn, in an oblique direction towards this line of the sun's greatest attraction, and forming what are known as the northeast and southeast trade-winds.

As the earth, in its path round the sun, gradually brings the *line* of attraction north, in summer these currents of air are carried *with* it; so that about the middle of May the current from the northeast has extended as far as the 38th or 39th degree of north latitude, and by the twentieth of June, the period of the sun's greatest northern inclination, to the northern portions of California and the southern portion of Oregon.

These northeast winds, in their progress across the continent, towards the Pacific ocean, pass over the snow-capped ridges of the Rocky mountains and the Sierra Nevada, and are of course deprived of all moisture which can be extracted from them by the low temperature of those regions of eternal snow, and consequently no moisture can be precipitated from them, in the form of dew or rain, in a higher temperature than that to which they have been subjected. They, therefore, pass over the hills and plains of California, where the temperature is very high in summer, in a very dry state; and so far from being charged with moisture, they absorb, like a sponge, all that the atmosphere and surface of the earth can yield, until both become, apparently, perfectly dry.

This process commences, as I have said, when the line of the sun's greatest attraction comes north in summer, bringing with it these vast atmospheric movements, and on their approach, producing the dry seasons in California, which, governed by these laws, continues until some time after the sun repasses the equator in September, when, about the middle of November, the climate being relieved from these northeast currents of air, the southwest winds set in from the ocean charged with moisture—the rains commence and continue to fall, not constantly, as some persons have represented, but with sufficient frequency to designate the period of their continuance, from about the middle of November until the middle of May, in the latitude of San Francisco, as the *wet season*.

It follows, as a matter of course, that the *dry season* commences first, and continues longest in the southern portions of the Territory, and that the climate of the northern part is influenced in a much less degree by the causes which I have mentioned, than any other section of the country. Consequently we find that as

low down as latitude 39 deg. rains are sufficiently frequent in summer to render irrigation quite unnecessary to the perfect maturity of any crop which is suited to the soil and climate.

There is an extensive ocean current of cold water which comes from the northern regions of the Pacific, or, perhaps, from the Arctic, and flows along the coast of California. It comes charged with, and emits in its progress, air, which appears in the form of fog when it comes in contact with a higher temperature on the American coast, as the gulf stream of the Atlantic exhales vapor when it meets in any part of its progress a lower temperature. This current has not been surveyed, and, therefore, its source, temperature, velocity, width, and course, have not been accurately ascertained.

It is believed by Lieutenant Maury, on what he considers sufficient evidence—and no higher authority can be cited—that this current comes from the coasts of China and Japan, flows northwardly to the peninsula of Kamtschatka, and, making a circuit to the eastward, strikes the American coast in about latitude 41 or 42°. It passes thence southwardly, and finally loses itself in the tropics.

Below latitude thirty-nine, and west of the foot hills of the Sierra Nevada, the forests of California are limited to some scattering groves of oak in the valleys and along the borders of the streams, and of red wood on the ridges and in the gorges of the hills—sometimes extending into the plains. Some of the hills are covered with dwarf shrubs, which may be used as fuel. With these exceptions, the whole territory presents a surface without trees or shrubbery. It is covered, however, with various species of grass, and for many miles from the coast with wild oats, which, in the valleys, grow most luxuriantly. These grasses and oats mature and ripen early in the dry season, and soon cease to protect the soil from the scorching rays of the sun. As the summer advances, the moisture in the atmosphere and the earth, to a considerable depth, soon becomes exhausted ; and the radiation of heat, from the extensive naked plains and hill-sides, is very great.

The cold, dry currents of air from the northeast, after passing the Rocky mountains and the Sierra Nevada, descend to the Pacific, and absorb the moisture of the atmosphere, to a great distance from the land. The cold air from the mountains, and that which accompanies the great ocean current from the northwest, thus become united, and vast banks of fog are generated, which, when driven by the wind, has a penetrating, or *cutting* effect on the human skin, much more uncomfortable than would be felt in the humid atmosphere of the Atlantic, at a much lower temperature.

As the sun rises from day to day, week after week, and month after month, in unclouded brightness during the dry season, and pours down his unbroken rays on the dry, unprotected surface of the country, the heat becomes so much greater inland than it is on the ocean, that an under-current of cold air, bringing the fog with it, rushes over the coast range of hills, and through their numerous passes, towards the interior.

Every day, as the heat, inland, attains a sufficient temperature, the cold dry wind from the ocean commences below. This is usually from eleven to one o'clock ; and as the day advances the wind increases and continues to blow till late at night. When the vacuum is filled, or the equilibrium of the atmosphere restored, the wind ceases, a perfect calm prevails until about the same hour the

following day, when the same process commences and progresses as before, and these phenomena are of daily occurrence, with few exceptions, throughout the dry season.

These cold winds and fogs render the climate at San Francisco, and all along the coast of California, except the extreme southern portion of it, probably more uncomfortable, to those not accustomed to it, in summer than in winter.

A few miles inland, where the heat of the sun modifies and softens the wind from the ocean, the climate is moderate and delightful. The heat in the middle of the day is not so great as to retard labor, or render exercise in the open air uncomfortable. The nights are cool and pleasant. This description of climate prevails in all the valleys along the coast range, and extends throughout the country, north and south, as far eastward as the valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. In this vast plain the sea-breeze loses its influence, and the degree of heat in the middle of the day, during the summer months, is much greater than is known on the Atlantic coast in the same latitudes. It is dry, however, and probably not more oppressive. On the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, and especially in the deep ravines of the streams, the thermometer frequently ranges from 110° to 115° in the shade, during three or four hours of the day, say from eleven until three o'clock. In the evening, as the sun declines, the radiation of heat ceases. The cool, dry atmosphere from the mountains spreads over the whole country, and renders the nights cool and invigorating.

I have been kindly furnished by Surgeon General Lawson, U. S. Army, with thermometrical observations, taken at the following places in California, viz: At San Francisco, by Assistant Surgeon W. C. Parker, for six months, embracing the last quarter of 1847, and the first quarter of 1848. The monthly mean temperature was as follows—October, 57° ; November, 49° ; December, 50° ; January, 49° ; February, 50° ; March, 51°.

At Monterey, in latitude 36° 38′ North, and longitude 121° West, on the coast, about one degree and a half South of San Francisco, by Assistant Surgeon W. S. King, for seven months, from May to November inclusive. The monthly mean temperature was: May, 56° ; June, 59° ; July, 62° ; August, 59° ; September, 58° ; October, 60° ; November, 56°.

At Los Angelos, latitude 34° 7′, longitude west 118° 7′, by Assistant Surgeon John S. Griffin, for ten months—from June, 1847, to March, 1848, inclusive. The monthly mean temperature was: June, 73° ; July, 74° : August, 75° ; September, 75° ; October, 69° ; November, 59° ; December, 60° ; January, 58° ; February, 55° ; March, 58°. This place is about 40 miles from the coast.

At San Diego, latitude 32° 45′, longitude west 117° 11′, by Assistant Surgeon J. D. Summers, for the following three months of 1849, viz. : July, monthly mean temperature, 71° ; August, 75° ; September, 70°.

At Suttersville, on the Sacramento river, latitude 38° 32′, longitude west 121° 34′, by Assistant Surgeon R. Murray, for the following months of 1849: July, monthly mean temperature, 73° ; August, 70° ; September, 65° ; October, 65°.

These observations show a remarkably high temperature at San Francisco during the six months from October to March inclusive ; a variation of only eight degrees in the monthly mean, and a mean temperature for the six months of 51°.

At Monterey we find the mean monthly temperature from May to November

inclusive, varying only 6°, and the mean temperature of the 7 months to have been 58°. If we take the three summer months, the mean heat was 60°. The mean of the three winter months was little over 49° ; showing a mean difference, on that part of the coast, of only 11° between summer and winter.

The mean temperature of San Francisco, for the three winter months, was precisely the same as at Monterey—a little over 40°.

As these cities are only about one degree and a half distant from each other, and both situated near the ocean, the temperature at both, in summer, may very reasonably be supposed to be as nearly similar as the thermometer shows it to be in winter.

The mean temperature of July, August, and September, at San Diego, only 3° 53′ south of Monterey, was 72°. The mean temperature of the same months at Monterey was a little over 59° ; showing a mean difference of 13°.

This would seem to indicate that the cold ocean current is thrown off from the southern part of the coast by Point Conception, and the islands south of it ; and consequently its influence on the climate of San Diego is much less than at Monterey and San Francisco.

At Los Angelos, 40 miles distant from the coast, the mean temperature of the three months was 74° ; of the three autumn months 67° ; of the three winter months 57°.

At Suttersville, about one hundred and thirty miles from the ocean, and four degrees north of Los Angelos, the mean temperature of August, September, and October, was 67°. The mean temperature of the same months at Monterey was 59° ; showing a difference of 8° between the sea-coast and the interior, on nearly the same parallel of latitude. A much greater difference would undoubtedly appear if we had observations for the spring and summer months at Suttersville and the gold mines.

These variations in the climate of California account for the various and conflicting opinions and statements respecting it.

A stranger arriving at San Francisco in summer is annoyed by the cold winds and fogs, and pronounces the climate intolerable. A few months will modify if not banish his dislike, and he will not fail to appreciate the beneficial effects of a cool bracing atmosphere. Those who approach California overland, through the passes of the mountains, find the heat of summer, in the middle of the day, greater than they have been accustomed to, and therefore many complain of it.

Those who take up their residence in the valleys which are situated between the great plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and the coast range of hills, find the climate, especially in the dry season, as healthful and pleasant as it is possible for any climate to be which possesses sufficient heat to mature the cereal grains and edible roots of the temperate zone.

The division of the year into two distinct seasons—dry and wet—impresses those who have been accustomed to the variable climate of the Atlantic States unfavorably. The dry appearance of the country in summer, and the difficulty of moving about in winter, *seem* to impose serious difficulties in the way of agricultural prosperity, while the many and decided advantages resulting from the mildness of winter, and the bright, clear weather of summer, are not appreciated. These will appear when I come to speak of the productions of California. We ought not to

be surprised at the dislike which the immigrants frequently express to the climate. It is so unlike that from which they come, that they cannot readily appreciate its advantages, or become reconciled to its extremes of dry and wet.

If a native of California were to go to New England in winter, and see the ground frozen and covered with snow, the streams with ice, and find himself in a temperature many degrees colder than he had ever felt before, he would probably be as much surprised that people could or would live in so inhospitable a region, as any immigrant ever has been at what he has seen or felt in California.

So much are our opinions influenced by early impressions, the vicissitudes of the seasons with which we are familiar, love of country, home, and kindred, that we ought never to hazard a hasty opinion when we come in contact with circumstances entirely different from those to which we have all our lives been accustomed.

SOIL.

The valleys which are situated parallel to the coast range, and those which extend eastwardly in all directions among the hills towards the great plain of the Sacramento, are of unsurpassed fertility.

They have a deep black, alluvial soil, which has the appearance of having been deposited when they were covered with water. This idea is strengthened by the fact that the rising grounds on the borders of these valleys, and many hills of moderate elevation, have a soil precisely like that of the adjoining plains.

This soil is so porous, that it remains perfectly unbroken by gullies, notwithstanding the great quantity of water which falls in it annually during the wet season. The land in the northern part of the territory on the Trinity and other rivers, and on the borders of Clear Lake, as far as it has been examined, is said to be remarkably fertile.

The great valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin has evidently been, at some remote period, the bed of a lake; and those rivers, which drain it, present the appearance of having cut their channels through the alluvial deposit after it had been formed. In fact, it is not possible that they could have been instrumental in forming the plain through which they pass. Their head-waters come from the extreme ends of the valley, north and south; and, were it not for the supply of water received from the streams which flow into them from the Sierra Nevada, their beds would be almost if not quite dry in the summer months. The soil is very rich, and with a proper system of drainage and embankment, would, undoubtedly, be capable of producing any crop, except sugar cane, now cultivated in the Atlantic States of the Union.

There are many beautiful valleys and rich hill-sides among the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, which, when the profits of labor in mining shall be reduced so as to cause its application to agriculture, will probably support a large population. There is said to be a rich belt of well-timbered and watered country extending the whole length of the gold region between it and the Sierra Nevada, some twenty miles in width. There is no information sufficiently accurate respecting the eastern slope of the great snowy range to enable us to form any opinion of its general character or soil. Some of its valleys have been visited by miners, who represent them as equal to any portion of the country to the westward of it.

The great valley of the Colorado, situated between the Sierra Madre and the

Sierra Nevada, is but little known. It is inhabited by numerous tribes of savages, who manifest the most decided hostility towards the whites, and have hitherto prevented any explorations of their country, and do not permit emigrants to go through it. Therefore, parties from Santa Fé, on their way to California, are compelled to make a circuit of near a thousand miles northward to the Salt Lake, or about the same distance southward by the route of Gila. Although this valley is little known, there are indications that it is fertile and valuable.

The name of the river "Colorado" is descriptive of its waters; they are as deeply colored as those of the Missouri or Red River, while those of the Gila, which we know flows through barren lands, are clear.

It would seem impossible for a large river to collect sediment enough in a sandy, barren soil, to color its waters so deeply as to give it a name among those who first discovered and have since visited its shores. The probability, therefore, is, that this river flows through an alluvial valley of great fertility, which has never been explored. This conjecture is strengthened by the fact that the Indians who inhabit it are hostile, and oppose, as far as they can, all persons who attempt to enter or explore it. This has been their uniform course of conduct respecting all portions of the continent which have been fertile, abounding in game and the spontaneous productions of the earth.

As this valley is situated in the direct route from Santa Fé to California, its thorough exploration becomes a matter of very great importance, especially as it is highly probable that the elevated regions to the north of it, covered with snow during most of the year, will force the line of the great national railway to the Pacific through some portion of it.

The soil I have described, situated west of the Sierra Nevada, and embracing the plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, covers an area, as nearly as I can estimate, of between fifty and sixty thousand square miles, and would, under a proper system of cultivation, be capable of supporting a population equal to that of Ohio or New York at the present time.

PRODUCTS OF CALIFORNIA.

Previous to the treaty of peace with Mexico, and the discovery of gold, the exportable products of the country consisted almost exclusively of hides and tallow. The Californians were a pastoral people, and paid much more attention to the raising of horses and cattle than the cultivation of the soil.

Wheat, barley, maize, beans, and edible roots, were cultivated in sufficient quantity for home consumption, but, as far as I am informed, not for exportation. At that time a full grown ox, steer, or cow, was worth about two dollars. Beef cattle, delivered on the navigable waters of the bay of San Francisco, are now worth from $20 to $30 per head; horses, formerly worth from $5 to $10, are now valued at $60 to $150. The destruction of cattle for their hides and tallow has now entirely ceased, in consequence of the demand for beef. This demand will of course increase with the population; and it would seem that, in a very few years, there will be none to supply the market.

If we estimate the number of cattle, now in California, at 500,000 head, which is believed to be about the number—and the population at 120,000, for the year 1850—a low estimate—and suppose it to increase one hundred thousand per

annum, there will be in the Territory or State, in 1854, five hundred and twenty thousand people.

If we adopt the estimate of those well acquainted with the demand, of half a beef, on an average, to each inhabitant, it appears there will be a consumption, in 1850, of 60,000 head; in 1851, of 110,000; in 1852, of 160,000; in 1853, of 210,000; in 1854, of 260,000; making an aggregate of 800,000, which would absorb all the present stock, with its natural increase.

This is a very important matter, as connected with the amount of supply which that country will ultimately require from the Atlantic States of the Union. There is no other country on earth which has, or will ever possess, the means of supplying so great a demand.

It is now a well established fact among the emigrants to California, that oxen possess greater powers of endurance than mules or horses; that they will perform the distance with loaded wagons in less time, and come in at the end of the journey in better condition.

Cows are now driven in considerable numbers from Missouri, and the time cannot be far distant when cattle from the western states will be driven annually by tens of thousands to supply this new market.

If California increases in population as fast as the most moderate estimates would lead us to believe, it will not be five years before she will require more than one hundred thousand head of beef cattle per annum, from some quarter, to supply the wants of her people.

It must not be supposed that salt provisions may supply this vast demand. Those who have attempted to live on such food, during the dry season, have been attacked with scurvy and other cutaneous diseases, of which many have died.

There is no climate in the world where fresh meat and vegetables are more essential to human health. In fact they are indispensable.

It must not be inferred that cattle driven across the plains and mountains, from the western States, will be fit for beef on their arrival in California. But one winter and spring on the luxuriant pastures of that country will put them in a condition which would render them acceptable in any Atlantic market.

These grazing grounds are extensive enough to support five times as many cattle as may be *annually* required; therefore, there will be no scarcity of food for them.

I am acquainted with a drover who left California in December last, with the intention of bringing in ten thousand sheep from New Mexico. This shows that the flocks and herds, east of the Rocky Mountains, are looked to already as the source from which the markets on the Pacific are to be supplied.

The climate and soil of California are well suited to the growth of wheat, barley, rye, and oats. The temperature along the coast is too cool for the successful culture of maize, as a field crop. The fact that oats, the species which is cultivated in the Atlantic States, are annually self-sowed and produced on all the plains and hills along the coast, and as far inland as the sea-breeze has a marked influence on the climate, is sufficient proof that all the cereal grains may be successfully cultivated without the aid of *irrigation*.

It is quite true that *this auxiliary* was extensively employed at the missions, and undoubtedly increased the product of all crops to which it was applied, as it

will in any country on earth if skilfully used. This does not prove, however, that it was *essentially necessary* to the production of an ample reward to the husbandman. The experience of all the old inhabitants is sufficient evidence of this. If their imperfect mode of culture secured satisfactory returns, it is reasonable to presume that a more perfect system would produce much greater results. There is abundant evidence to prove that, in the rich alluvial valleys, wheat and barley have produced from forty to sixty bushels from one bushel of seed, *without irrigation.*

Irish potatoes, turnips, onions, in fact all the edible roots known and cultivated in the Atlantic States, are produced in great perfection. In all the valleys east of the coast range of hills the climate is sufficiently warm to mature crops of Indian corn, rice, and probably tobacco.

The cultivation of the grape has attracted much attention at the missions, among the residents of towns, and the rural population, and been attended with much success wherever it has been attempted. The dry season secures the fruit from these diseases which are so fatal in the Atlantic States, and it attains very great perfection.

The wine made from it is of excellent quality, very palatable, and can be produced in any quantity. The grapes are delicious, and produced with very little labor. When taken from the vines in bunches, and suspended in a dry room, by the stems, they become partially dry, retain their flavor, and remain several weeks, perhaps months, without decay.

Apples, pears, and peaches, are cultivated with facility, and there is no reason to doubt that all the fruits of the Atlantic States can be produced in great plenty and perfection.

The grasses are very luxuriant and nutritious, affording excellent pasture. The oats, which spring up the whole length of the sea-coast, and from forty to sixty miles inland, render the cultivation of that crop entirely unnecessary, and yield a very great quantity of nutritious food for horses, cattle, sheep. The dry season matures, and I may say, *cures* these grasses and oats, so that they remain in an excellent state of preservation during the summer and autumn, and afford an ample supply of forage. While the whole surface of the country appears parched, and vegetation destroyed, the numerous flocks and herds, which roam over it, continue in excellent condition.

Although the mildness of the winter months and the fertility of the soil secure to California very decided agricultural advantages, it is admitted that *irrigation* would be of very great importance, and necessarily increase the products of the soil in quantity and variety, during the greater part of the dry season. It should therefore be encouraged by government in the survey and disposition of the public lands as far as practicable.

The farmer derives some very important benefits from the dry season. His crops in harvest time are never injured by rain ; he can with perfect confidence permit them to remain in his fields as long after they have been gathered as his convenience may require ; he has no fears that they will be injured by wet or unfavorable weather. Hence it is that many who have long been accustomed to that climate, prefer it to the changeable weather east of the Rocky Mountains.

As already stated, the forests of California, south of latitude 39°, and west of

the foot hills of the Sierra Nevada, are limited to detached, scattering groves of oak in the valleys, and of red-wood on the ridges and on the gorges of the hills.

It can be of no practical use to speculate on the causes which have denuded so large an extent of country, further than to ascertain whether the soil is or is not favorable to the growth of forest trees.

When the dry season sets in, the entire surface is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass and oats, which, as the summer advances, becomes perfectly dry. The remains of all dead trees and shrubs also become dry. These materials, therefore, are very combustible, and usually take fire in the latter part of summer and beginning of autumn, which commonly passes over the whole country, destroying in its course the young shrubs and trees. In fact, it seems to be the same process which has destroyed or prevented the growth of forest trees on the prairies of the western States, and not any quality in the soil unfriendly to their growth.

The absence of timber and the continuance of the dry season are apt to be regarded by farmers, on first going into the country, as irremediable defects, and as presenting obstacles, almost insurmountable, to the successful progress of agriculture. A little experience will modify these opinions.

It is soon ascertained that the soil will produce abundantly without manure; that flocks and herds sustain themselves through the winter without being fed at the farm-yard, and, consequently, no labor is necessary to provide forage for them; that ditches are easily dug, which present very good barriers for the protection of crops, until live fences can be planted, and have time to grow. Forest trees may be planted with little labor, and in very few years attain a sufficient size for building and fencing purposes. Time may be usefully employed in sowing various grain and root crops, and, therefore, it is not necessary to gather them. They can be used or sold from the field where they grow. The labor, therefore, required in most of the old States to fell the forests, clear the land of rubbish, and prepare it for seed, may here be applied to other objects.

All these things, together with the *perfect security of all crops, in harvest time, from injury by wet weather*, are probably sufficient to meet any expense which may be incurred in irrigation, or caused, for a time, by a scanty supply of timber.

In the northern part of the Territory, above latitude 39°, and on the hills which rise from the great plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, to the foot of the Sierra Nevada, the forests of timber are beautiful and extensive, and would, if brought into use, be sufficiently productive to supply the wants of the southern and western portions of the State.

I have spoken of the agricultural products and resources of the country, without reference to the remarkable state of things caused by the discovery of gold, which, it is probable, will postpone for an indefinite time all efforts to improve the soil. As long as laborers can earn fifteen dollars or more per day, in collecting gold, they can very well afford to import their supplies from countries where the wages of labor are not more than fifty cents to one dollar per day. It is not, therefore, to be supposed that the soil will be cultivated more than the production of vegetables, fruits, and other articles so perishable in their nature that they cannot be brought from a great distance, will require.

To secure this important market for the products and manufactures of the States east of the Rocky Mountains is undoubtedly an object of the greatest importance. It will be considered in its proper place.

PUBLIC DOMAIN.

The extent and value of the public lands, suitable for agricultural purposes, in California, cannot be ascertained with any degree of accuracy until some very important preliminary questions shall have been settled.

It is not known whether the Jesuits who founded the mission, or their successors, the Franciscans, ever did, or do now hold any title from the Spanish crown to the lands which they occupied. Nor has any investigation been made to ascertain how far those titles, if they ever existed, have been invalidated by the acts of the priests, or the decrees of the Mexican government.

A superficial view of the matter would be very apt to lead to the supposition that the Jesuits, so celebrated for wisdom and cunning, would not fail to secure that which, at that time, would probably have been obtained by merely asking for it—a royal decree, granting to them all the lands they might require in that remote country for ecclesiastical purposes. There have been some intimations to that effect, but nothing is distinctly known. These missions embrace within their limits some of the most valuable lands in the Territory, and it is very important that it should be ascertained whether they belong to the Government, or may be justly claimed by individuals.

Most of the land, fit for cultivation, south of latitude 39°, and west of the valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, is claimed under what purport to be grants from the Mexican government.

Of most of these grants the minerals and metals are reserved to the government —conditions were coupled with many of them which have not been complied with. In others, the boundaries described embrace two or three times as much land as the grant conveys.

The Mexican law required all grants made by the provisional government, with few exceptions, to be confirmed by the Supreme Government. The great distance which separated them, and the unfrequent or difficult means of communication, made a compliance with the law so expensive and tardy, that it came to be almost disregarded.

There were other causes which led to this neglect.

Previous to the treaty with Mexico and the immigration of American citizens to that country, land was not regarded as of much value, except for grazing purposes. There was room enough for all. Therefore the claimants or proprietors did not molest each other, or inquire into the validity of titles.

These extensive grants are described by natural boundaries, such as mountains, bays, and promontories, which, in many instances, might allow of a variation of several miles in the establishment of a corner with chain and compass.

By the treaty of Guadaloupe Hidalgo, the United States purchased all the rights and interests of Mexico to and in California. This purchase not only embraced all the lands which had not been granted by Mexico, but all the reserved minerals and metals, and also reversionary rights which might accrue to Mexico from a want

of compliance on the part of the grantees with the conditions of their grants, or a *want of perfection in the grants.*

It will be perceived that this is a subject of very great importance, not only to the people of California, but to the United States, and calls for prompt and efficient action on the part of the government. It is believed that the appointment of competent commissioners, fully empowered to investigate these titles in a spirit of kindness towards the claimants, with power to confirm such titles as justice may seem to demand, or with instructions to report their proceedings and awards to Congress, for confirmation or rejection, will be the best and perhaps the only satisfactory mode of adjusting this complex and difficult question.

The lands in the northern part of the Territory, above the 39°, have not been explored or granted. They are supposed to embrace an area of about twenty millions of acres, a large portion of which is doubtless valuable for its timber and soil.

Comparatively few grants have been obtained in the great valley of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. This vast tract, therefore, containing, as is estimated, from twelve to fifteen millions of acres, belongs mostly to the Government. South of this valley, and west of the Colorado, within the limits of California, as indicated in her constitution, there are said to be extensive tracts of valuable unappropriated land, and on investigation it will probably appear that there are many of them in detached bodies, which have not been granted.

I do not speak of the gold region, embracing the entire foot-hills of the Sierra Nevada, some five hundred miles long and sixty miles broad, in connexion with the public domain, which may be embraced in the general land system for sale and settlement, for reasons which will be hereafter assigned.

The survey of the public lands on a system suited to the interests of the country is a matter of very great importance. In the inhabited portions of the Territory the boundaries of Mexican grants, running as they do in all directions, will render the system of surveys by parallels of latitude and longitude, quite impracticable.

In all parts of the country irrigation is desirable, and its benefits should be secured, as far as possible, by suitable surveys and legal regulations. Most of the valleys are watered by streams sufficiently large to be rendered very useful. It would, therefore, seem wise to lay off the land in conformity to the course of the hills and streams which bound and drain the valleys.

A system of drainage, which would also secure irrigation, is absolutely necessary to give value to the great plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin. This valley is so extensive and level, that if the rivers passing through it were never to overflow their banks, the rain which falls in winter would render the greater portion of it unfit for cultivation. The foundation of such a system can only be established in the survey and sale of the land.

This can be done by laying out canals and drains, at suitable distances, and in proper directions, and by leaving wide margins to the rivers, that they may have plenty of room to increase their channels when their waters shall be confined within them by embankments.

It would be well also to regulate the price of these lands, so as to meet, in some degree, the expense of draining them.

This system would, when agriculture shall become a pursuit in California, make this valley one of the most beautiful and productive portions of the Union.

COMMERCIAL RESOURCES.

The commercial resources of California are, at present, founded entirely on her *metallic wealth*—her vast mineral treasures remaining undeveloped, and her fertile soil almost wholly neglected: and this must continue to be the case as long as labor, employed in collecting gold, shall be more profitable than in any other pursuit which can furnish the sinews of commerce.

The day is probably not distant, however, when her minerals, especially the quicksilver mines, will be extensively and profitably worked.

Gold is the product of the country, and is immediately available, in an uncoined state, for all the purposes of exchange. It is not there, as in other countries where the productions of the earth and of art are sent to markets—foreign or domestic—to be exchanged for the precious metals, or other articles of value. There, gold not only supplies the medium of domestic trade, but of foreign commerce.

At first view, this state of things would seem to be unfavorable to an extensive intercourse with other parts of the world, because of the want of return freights of *home production*, for the vast number of vessels which will arrive with supplies.

These vessels, however, making no calculations on return cargoes, will estimate the entire profits of the voyage on their outward freights, and become, on their arrival, willing carriers for a comparatively small consideration.

This tendency in the course of trade, it would seem, must make San Francisco a warehouse for the supply, to a certain extent, of all the ports of the Pacific, American, Asiatic, and the Islands.

Almost every article now exported by them finds a ready market in California, and the establishment of a mint will bring there also the silver bullion, amounting to more than ten millions per annum, from the west coast of Mexico, and perhaps, ultimately from Chili and Peru, to be assayed and coined.

Vessels bound round Cape Horn, with cargoes for markets on the American coast of the Pacific, can, by taking advantage of the southeast trade winds, and "standing broad-off the Cape," make the voyage to San Francisco in as short a time as they can to Valparaiso or any port south of California. Vessels have sailed from our Atlantic ports to San Francisco in less than one hundred days, and they have been, in more than one instance, over one hundred and twenty days in going from Panama to San Francisco.

This astonishing difference in time and distance was caused by the course of the winds, and the "gulf stream" of the Pacific, mentioned in my remarks on the climate of California.

The vessels from our Atlantic ports took advantage of the winds by steering *from the Cape* as far into the Pacific as to be enabled to take a course west of the gulf stream in sailing northward, thus availing themselves, first of the southeast, then of the northwest "trades," and avoiding opposing currents.

The vessels from Panama were kept back by calms, adverse winds, and currents. It will be perceived, therefore, that there can be no inducement for vessels bound round Cape Horn, with mixed or assorted cargoes, to stop at Valparaiso, Callao, Guayaquil, or any other port on the west coast, because the exports of all those places will seek a market at San Francisco; and their supply of merchandise, as *return freight*, will be delivered at less expense than it can be by vessels direct from

Atlantic ports, American or European. This tendency of trade to concentrate at San Francisco will be aided by the course of exchange.

Gold dust is worth but $17 per ounce in Chili. It is worth $18 at the United States mint. If, therefore, a merchant of Valparaiso has ten thousand ounces in San Francisco, received in payment for lumber, barley, flour, or other produce, and desires an invoice of goods from the United States or Europe, he will gain $10,000 at the outset, by sending his gold to New York, besides saving something on the freight and insurance, and at the least one month's interest.

The countries on the west coast of America have no exports which find a market in China, or other parts of Asia. San Francisco will, therefore, become not only the mart of these exports, but also of the products and manufactures of India, required in exchange for them, which must be paid for, principally, in gold coin, or gold dust. Neither gold coin nor gold dust will answer as a remittance to China. Gold, in China, is not currency in any shape, nor is it received in payment of import duties, or taxes on land, or on the industry of the people.

The value of pure gold in China is not far from $14 the ounce. Hence, the importer of manufactures and products of India into San Francisco will remit the gold coin or dust direct to New York, for investment in sterling bills on London. These bills will be sent to London, and placed to the credit of the firm in China from whom the merchandise had been received, and who, on learning of the remittance having gone forward to their agents, will draw a *six months' sight bill* for the amount, which will sell in China at the rate of four shillings and *two* pence or *three* pence per dollar.

I have a statement before me from one of the most eminent merchants and bankers of New York, who was for many years engaged extensively in the India trade, which shows that the profit or gain on ten thousand ounces of gold, thus remitted, would be - - - - - - - - - - - - $34,434 44

And that the loss on the same quantity sent direct to China, would be - - - - - - - - - - - - 15,600 00

Total difference in profit and loss in favor of the remittance to New York - - - - - - - - - - - - - $50,034 44

It will thus be perceived that nature has so arranged the winds and currents of the Pacific, and disposed of her vast treasures in the hills and mountains of California, as to give to the harbor of San Francisco the control of the commerce of that ocean, as far as it may be connected with the west coast of America.

Important as the commerce of the Pacific undoubtedly is, and will be, to California, it cannot now, nor will it ever compare in magnitude and value to the domestic trade between her and the older States of the Union.

Two years ago California did not probably contain more than fifteen thousand people. That portion of it which has since been so wonderfully peopled by American citizens, was comparatively without inhabitants, without resources, and not supplied with the common comforts of shelter afforded by a forest country.

Notwithstanding the great distances emigrants have been compelled to travel to reach the Territory, more than one hundred thousand have overcome all difficulties and spread themselves over its hills and plains. They have been supplied from distances as great as they themselves have passed, with not only the necessaries,

but the comforts and many of the luxuries of life. Houses have been imported from China, Chili, and the Atlantic States of the Union. All the materials required in building cities and towns have been added to the wants of a people so numerous, destitute, and remote from the sources of supply.

These wants will exist as long as emigration continues to flow into the country, and labor employed in collecting gold shall be more profitable than its application to agriculture, the mechanic arts, and the great variety of pursuits which are fostered and sustained in other civilized communities.

This may be shown, by mentioning the prices of a few articles. Last summer and autumn, lumber was sold in San Francisco at $300 to $400 per thousand feet. At Stockton and Sacramento city, at $500 to $600. At these prices it could be made in the territory, and many persons were engaged in the business. I perceive, by recent accounts, that the price had fallen at San Francisco to $75; at this price it cannot be made where labor is from $10 to $15 per day, and the difficulties attending its manufacture are much greater than in the Atlantic States. Lumber can be delivered in our large lumber markets for an average of the various qualities of $16, and freighted to San Francisco for $24, making $40 per thousand feet. This price would cause the manufacture of it in California to be abandoned. We may add $20 per thousand, to meet any increase of price in the article itself, or in the freight, and the result would be the same.

It is probable that the demand, for several years to come, will not be less than twenty millions of feet per annum, which, at $40 per thousand, will be $8,000,000.

When California comes to have a population of 200,000, which she will have before the close of the present year, she will require near half a million of barrels of flour from some quarter, and no country can supply it as good and cheap as the old States of the Union. Including freight and insurance, this may be set down as an item of about $5,000,000. The article of clothing, allowing $20 to each person, would be $4,000,000.

There is no pretension to accuracy in these items, and they may be estimated too high, but it is quite as probable they are too low.

We have no data on which to found a calculation of what the value of the trade between the States east of the Rocky Mountains and California will be during the current year. I will venture the opinion, however, that it will not fall short of twenty-five millions of dollars. It may go far beyond that sum. At present, I can perceive no cause which will retard or diminish emigration.

If the movement shall continue five years, our commerce with that Territory may reach one hundred millions per annum. This is doubtless a startling sum, but it must be borne in mind that we have to build cities and towns, supply machinery for mining, coal for domestic purposes and steam navigation, and all the multifarious articles used in providing the comforts and luxuries of life, for half a million of people, who will have transferred themselves to a country which is to produce, comparatively, nothing except minerals and the precious metals, and whose pursuits will enable them to purchase, at any cost, whatever may be necessary for their purposes.

It is difficult to imagine or calculate the effect which will be produced on all the industrial pursuits of the people of the old States of the Union, by this withdrawal from them of half a million of producers, who, in their new homes and

new pursuits, will *give existence* to a commerce almost equal in value to our foreign trade. Let no one, therefore, suppose he is not interested in the welfare of California. As well may he believe his interests would not be influenced by closing our ports and cutting off intercourse with all the world.

The distance round Cape Horn is so great that breadstuffs and many other articles of food deteriorate, and many others are so perishable in their nature, that they would decay on the passage. This would be the case particularly with all kinds of vegetables and undried fruits. Until some more speedy mode of communication be established by which produce can be transferred, the farmers and planters of the old States will not realize the full value of this new market on the Pacific.

Many other important interests will be kept back, especially the consumption of coal. The American steamers now on that ocean, those on their way there, and others shortly to be sent out, will consume not far from one hundred thousand tons of coal per annum. The scarcity of wood in California will bring coal into general use as a fuel, as soon as it can be obtained at reasonable prices. Suppose there may be, three years hence, forty thousand houses, which shall consume five tons each per annum. This, with the steamers, would be a consumption of three hundred thousand tons. If delivered at $20 per ton, it would compete successfully with the coal from Vancouver's Island and New Holland, and amount to $6,000,000.

The construction of a railroad across the Isthmus of Panama would secure the market for those articles against all competition.

Some idea may be formed of the demand for them from the prices paid in San Francisco last autumn. Coal was sold at $60 to $100 per ton; potatoes $16 per bushel; turnips and onions for 25 to 62½ cents each; eggs from $10 to $12 per dozen.

The distance from Chagres to New York has recently been run in seven days. The same speed would carry a steamboat from Panama to San Francisco in ten days. Allow three days to convey freight across the Isthmus, on a railway, and both passengers and freight will be conveyed from New York to San Francisco in twenty days.

This celerity of movement would secure for American produce the entire market of California. Sailing vessels may be successfully employed between our Atlantic and gulf ports and the terminus of the railway on this side of the Isthmus; and propellers from Panama to San Francisco. These latter vessels will be found peculiarly suited to that trade; they can use their steam through the calms of the bay of Panama, and against head winds and currents going north, and their sails with favorable winds and currents coming south.

These modes of conveyance, in connexion with the railroad across the Isthmus, would be sufficiently expeditious and economical to turn the tide of commerce, between the Atlantic and Pacific States of the Union, into that channel. The tendency of our commerce on the Pacific to promote the employment of ocean steamers is of much importance as connected with the defence of our extensive line of coast from latitude 32 deg. to 49 deg., the protection of the whale fishery, and other branches of trade on that ocean. The establishment of a line of heavy steamers to China would promote all these objects—increase our intercourse with

that country, and probably be the means of opening communications with Japan. Money wisely employed in promoting these objects, it is believed, would add more to the power and prosperity of the country than its expenditure on any *general system* of fortification at the present prices of labor and materials. There is one point, however, of such vast importance, that no time should be lost in taking the necessary steps to render it perfectly impregnable—that is the entrance to the harbor of San Francisco. On the strength of the works which may be erected to defend that passage will depend the safety of California in time of war with a maritime power. Permit a hostile fleet to cast anchor in the harbor of San Francisco, and the country would be virtually conquered.

The coast has not been surveyed, nor has its outline been correctly ascertained. There are many rocks above and below the water-line, and small islands not mentioned or indicated on any chart, which render navigation near the land, especially at night, extremely dangerous.

An accurate survey of the coast, to commence at the most important points, the construction of light-houses, and the placing of buoys in proper positions, are objects of much importance, and, it is not doubted, will attract the early attention of Government.

METALLIC AND MINERAL WEALTH.

The gold region of California is between four and five hundred miles long, and from forty to fifty miles broad, following the line of the Sierra Nevada. Further discoveries may, and probably will, increase the area. It embraces within its limits those extensive ranges of hills which rise on the eastern border of the plain of the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and extending eastwardly from fifty to sixty miles, they attain an elevation of about four thousand feet, and terminate at the base of the main ridge of the Sierra Nevada. There are numerous streams which have their sources in the springs of the Sierra, and receive the water from its melting snows, and that which falls in rain during the wet season.

These streams form rivers, which have cut their channels through the ranges of foot-hills westwardly to the plain, and disembogue into the Sacramento and San Joaquin. These rivers are from ten to fifteen and probably some of them twenty miles apart.

The principal formation, or substratum, of these hills is talcose slate; the superstratum sometimes penetrating to a great depth, is quartz. This, however, does not cover the entire face of the country, but extends in large bodies in various directions—is found in masses and small fragments on the surface, and seen along the ravines, and in the mountains overhanging the rivers, and in the hill-sides in its original beds. It crops out in the valleys and on the tops of the hills, and forms a striking feature of the entire country over which it extends. From innumerable evidences and indications it has come to be the universally-admitted opinion among the miners and intelligent men who have examined this region, that the *gold, whether in detached particles and pieces, or in veins, was created in combination with the quartz.* Gold is not found on the surface of the country presenting the appearance of having been thrown up and scattered in all directions by volcanic action. It is only found in particular localities, and attended by

peculiar circumstances and indications. It is found in the bars and shoals of the rivers—in ravines, and in what are called the dry diggings.

The rivers, in forming their channels, or breaking their way through the hills, have come in contact with the quartz containing the gold veins, and by constant attrition cut the gold into fine flakes and dust, and it is found among the sand and gravel of their beds at those places where the swiftness of the current reduces it, in the dry season, to the narrowest possible limits, and where a wide margin is, consequently, left on each side, over which the water rushes during the wet season with great force.

As the velocity of some streams is greater than others, so is the gold found in fine or coarse particles, apparently corresponding to the degree of attrition to which it has been exposed. The water from the hills and upper valleys, in finding its way to the rivers, has cut deep ravines, and, wherever it came in contact with the quartz, has dissolved or crumbled it in pieces.

In the dry season these channels are mostly without water, and gold is found in the beds and margins of many of them in large quantities, but in a much coarser state than in the rivers; owing, undoubtedly, to the moderate flow and temporary continuance of the current, which has reduced it to smooth shapes, not unlike pebbles, but had not sufficient force to cut it into flakes or dust.

The dry diggings are places where quartz, containing gold, has cropped out, and been disintegrated, crumbled to fragments, pebbles, and dust, by the action of water and the atmosphere. The gold has been left as it was made, in all imaginable shapes; in pieces of all sizes, from one grain to several pounds in weight. The evidences that it was created in combination with quartz are too numerous and striking to admit of doubt or cavil. *They are found in combination in large quantities.*

A very large proportion of the pieces of gold found in these situations have more or less quartz adhering to them. In many specimens they are so combined they cannot be separated without reducing the whole mass to powder, and subjecting it to the action of quicksilver.

This gold not having been exposed to the attrition of a strong current of water, retains, in a great degree, its original conformation.

These diggings, in some places, spread over valleys of considerable extent, which have the appearance of an alluvion, formed by washings from the adjoining hills, of decomposed quartz and slate earth, and vegetable matter.

In addition to these facts it is beyond doubt true, that several vein-mines have been discovered in the quartz, from which numerous specimens have been taken, showing the minute connexion between the gold and the rocks, and indicating a value hitherto unknown in gold mining.

These veins do not present the appearance of places where gold may have been lodged by some violent eruption. It is combined with the quartz, in all imaginable forms and degrees of richness.

The rivers present very striking, and it would seem, conclusive evidence respecting the quantity of gold remaining undiscovered in the quartz veins. It is not probable that the gold in the dry diggings, and that in the rivers—the former in lumps, the latter in dust—was created by different processes. That which is found in the rivers has undoubtedly been cut or worn from the veins in the rock, with

which their currents have come in contact. All of them appear to be equally rich. This is shown by the fact that a laboring man may collect nearly as much in one river as he can in another. They intersect and cut through the gold region, running from east to west, at irregular distances of fifteen to twenty, and perhaps some of them thirty miles apart.

Hence it appears that the gold veins are equally rich in all parts of that most remarkable section of country. Were it wanting, there are further proofs of this in the ravines and dry diggings, which uniformly confirm what nature so plainly shows in the rivers.

For the purpose of forming some opinion respecting the probable amount or value of treasure in the gold region, it will be proper to state the estimates which have been made of the quantity collected since its discovery.

Gold was first discovered on the South fork of the American river, at a place called Sutter's mill, now Coloma—late in May or early in June, 1848. Information which could be relied on announcing this discovery was not received in this city until late in the following autumn.

No immigration into the mines could, therefore, have taken place from the old States in that year. The number of miners was, consequently, limited to the population of the territory—some five hundred men from Oregon—Mexicans and other foreigners who happened to be in the country, or came into it during the summer and autumn, and the Indians, who were employed by or sold their gold to the whites.

It is supposed there were not far from five thousand men employed in collecting gold during that season. If we suppose they obtained an average of one thousand dollars each—which is regarded by well-informed persons as a low estimate—the aggregate amount will be $5,000,000.

Information of this discovery spread in all directions during the following winter; and, on the commencement of the dry season in 1849, people came into the Territory from all quarters—from Chili, Peru, and other States on the Pacific coast of South America—from the west coast of Mexico—the Sandwich Islands, China, and New Holland.

The emigration from the United States came in last, if we except those who crossed the Isthmus of Panama, and went up the coast in steamers, and a few who sailed early on a voyage round Cape Horn.

The American emigration did not come in by sea, in much force, until July and August, and that overland did not begin to arrive until the last of August and first of September. The Chilinos and Mexicans were early in the country. In the month of July it was supposed there were fifteen thousand foreigners in the mines.

At a place called Sonoranian camp, it was believed there were at least ten thousand Mexicans. They had quite a city of tents, booths, and log cabins; hotels, restaurants, stores, and shops of all descriptions, furnished with whatever money could procure. Ice was brought from the Sierra, and ice-creams added to numerous other luxuries. An inclosure made of the trunks and branches of trees, and lined with cotton cloth, served as a sort of amphitheatre for bull-fights; other amusements, characteristic of the Mexicans, were to be seen in all directions.

The foreigners resorted principally to the southern mines, which gave them a great superiority in numerical force over the Americans, and enabled them to take

possession of some of the richest in that part of the country. In the early part of the season, the Americans were mostly employed on the forks of the American and on Bear, Uba, and Feather Rivers. As their numbers increased they spread themselves over the southern mines, and collisions were threatened between them and the foreigners. The latter, however, for some cause, either fear, or having satisfied their cupidity, or both, began to leave the mines late in August, and by the end of September many of them were out of the country.

It is not probable that during the first part of the season there were more than five or six thousand Americans in the mines. This would swell the whole number, including foreigners, to about twenty thousand the beginning of September. This period embraced about half of the season during which gold may be successfully collected in the rivers.

Very particular and extensive inquiries respecting the daily earnings and acquisitions of the miners lead to the opinion that they averaged an ounce per day. This is believed by many to be a low estimate; but from the best information I was able to procure, I am of opinion it approaches very near actual results. The half of the season, up to 1st of September, would give sixty-five working days, and to each laborer, at $16 per ounce, $1,040. If, therefore, we assume $1,000 as the average collected by each laborer, we shall probably not go beyond the mark.

This would give an aggregate of $20,000,000 dollars for the first half of the season—$15,000,000 of which was probably collected by foreigners. During the last half of the season the number of foreigners was very much diminished, and, perhaps, did not exceed five thousand. At this time the American immigration had come in by land and sea, and the number of our fellow-citizens in the mines had, as was estimated, increased to between forty and fifty thousand. They were most of them inexperienced in mining, and it is probable the results of their labors were not as great as has been estimated for the first part of the season, and experienced miners; assuming that the average of half an ounce per day ought to be considered as reasonable, it would give an aggregate of about $20,000,000. If from this we deduct one-fourth on account of the early commencement of the wet season, we have an estimate of $15,000,000; at least five of which was collected by foreigners, who possessed many advantages from their experience in mining and knowledge of the country.

These estimates give, as the result of the operations in the mines for 1848 and 1849, the round sum of $40,000,000—one half of which was probably collected and carried out of the country by foreigners.

From the best information I could obtain, I am led to believe that at least $20,000,000 of the $40,000,000 were taken from the rivers, and that their richness has not been sensibly diminished, except in a few locations, which had early attracted large bodies of miners. This amount has principally been taken from the northern rivers, or those which empty into the Sacramento; the southern rivers or those which flow into the San Joaquin, having been, comparatively, but little resorted to until near the close of the last season. These rivers are, however, believed by those who have visited them, to be richer in the precious metal than those in the northern part of the gold region.

There is one river, which from reported recent discoveries, and not included in the description of those flowing into the great plain west of the Sierra Nevada, is

as rich in gold as any of them. That is the Trinity, which rises north of the head waters of the Sacramento, and discharges into the Pacific not far from the fortieth degree of north latitude.

There are, as nearly as my recollection serves me, twelve principal rivers in which gold has been found ; but most of the twenty millions in the above estimate was taken from six or seven of them, where it was first discovered and most accessible.

Adopting the hypothesis that the gold found in the beds of these streams has been cut or worn from the veins in the quartz through which they have forced their way, and considering the fact that they are *all rich*, and are said to be nearly equally productive, we may form some idea of the vast amount of treasure remaining undisturbed in the veins which run through the masses of rock in various directions over a space forty or fifty miles wide, and near five hundred miles long.

If we may be allowed to form a conjecture respecting the richness of these veins from the quantity of lump or coarse gold found in the dry diggings, where it appears to occupy nearly the same superficies it did originally in the rock—its specific gravity being sufficient to resist ordinary moving causes—we shall be led to an estimate almost beyond human calculation and belief. Yet, as far as I can perceive, there is no plausible reason why the veins which remain in the quartz may not be as valuable as those which have become separated from the decomposed rock. This matter can only be satisfactorily decided by actual discoveries.

The gold region of California having attracted a large share of public attention, it was to be expected that various suggestions and propositions would be made with respect to the proper mode of disposing of it.

The difficulty in arranging a suitable plan has been the want of accurate information on which a well considered opinion might be formed. Its distance from the seat of government, the conflicting statements and reports respecting it, served only to bewilder and mystify the public mind, and render a thorough examination of it necessary, to ascertain whether its value is such as to render legislation necessary for its proper protection and management.

It appearing from the preceding part of this report, that it is sufficiently important to require laws suited to the conditions and development of its wealth, we are necessarily brought to the consideration of the proper rules and regulations to be adopted for that purpose.

The survey and sale of that section of country, under our present land system, or any other mode which may be devised, would, undoubtedly, cause very serious discontent among those who have gone, and all who may desire to go there to collect gold, and a most unnecessary and unavoidable inequality in the distribution of wealth among the purchasers.

Sections and parts of sections of land having no indications of gold on the surface, but possessing untold treasure in the bowels of the earth, might be sold for what would be a mere trifle in comparison of their real value. Capitalists would overbid the daring, strong-armed day-labourer, who had braved the storms of Cape Horn, or the privations of a journey across the plains ; and, by the power and combination of resources, would possess themselves of the most valuable mines which have been discovered, and employ skilful miners to examine the

country, with as much secresy as possible, for the purpose of making such discoveries as would enable them, in a great degree, to monopolize the most valuable portions of the country.

It is much easier to imagine than describe the discontent, perhaps disorder, which would spring up among an hundred thousand freemen deprived of the privilege of an equal enjoyment of, or participation in, what they have been in the habit of regarding as the common property of the people of the whole Union.

It is, perhaps, more than doubtful whether such laws could be enforced. The employment of troops for that purpose would not only be odious, but ineffectual; they would be more likely to set an example of insubordination, by desertion, than to compel obedience in others.

The people would unite with them in producing anarchy and confusion. No system, therefore, which is not in accordance with the interest of the people can be carried into successful operation. It is always fortunate when laws can be so framed as to harmonize those interests with the policy and duty of the Government. It is believed that may be accomplished in this case.

While every American citizen in the mines is aware that he is on Government property, and would consider any attempt to drive him away as an act of oppression, he at the same time feels that something is due from him for the privilege he enjoys, and he would willingly pay a reasonable sum to have those privileges defined, and to be protected in the enjoyment of them.

The gold in the rivers, the dry diggings, and the ravines, is accessible to any man who has the strength to use a pan or washer, a spade and pickaxe.

The employment of machinery may, perhaps, facilitate its collection, but it is not essential. Every man is master of his own movements. The case will be very different with the vein mines, which yet remain in the rock. To work them successfully will require machinery, with horse or steam power, involving an expenditure of capital in proportion to the extent of the operations.

No prudent man will make such investments until his rights and privileges shall have been clearly defined by law. In the absence of all legal regulation, if a man were to discover a vein mine, and incur the expense of erecting machinery to work it, any other person, citizen, or foreigner, might construct an establishment alongside of him, deprive him of his discovery, and destroy the value of his property. Hence it will be perceived that any law prescribing the privileges and duties of miners should be so framed as to secure the rights of all.

There is some fertile soil in the gold region,—beautiful valleys and rich hillsides, which, under circumstances favorable to agriculture, would undoubtedly be valuable for that purpose; but at present, and as long as the collection of gold shall continue to reward labor so much more abundantly than the cultivation of the soil, the important matter to be considered is, the proper mode of disposing of the metallic wealth of the country.

The first step, in my opinion, should be to reserve the entire region, where gold is found, from the operation of the pre-emption laws, and from sale, so that it may be now regarded as the *common treasure* of the American people, and hereafter as a rich inheritance to their posterity. Then provide for the appointment of a commissioner of the mines, and a sufficient number of assistant commissioners to carry the law into effect.

Let the office of the commissioner be established at some point convenient to the mines, say Sacramento city, and the offices of his assistants on the principal rivers, and in the most productive districts. Provide that any and every American citizen, on application at the office of the commissioner, or any of his assistants, and by paying one ounce, or $16, or such as may be considered just and proper, shall be entitled to receive a license or permit to dig anywhere in the Territory for one year. Provide, also, that any one who shall *discover*, or purchase of the discoverer, a vein mine, shall be entitled to work it, to a certain extent, under proper regulations, on paying to the commissioner such per cent. on the proceeds of the mine as may be a suitable tax on the privileges granted. It will be necessary also to allow the miner to cut and use such timber and other building materials as his business requires; and, also, to allow those who work under permits the privilege of erecting cabins for shelter through the winter. Authorize the commissioner to lay out sites for towns in convenient situations to the mines, and offer the lots for sale, reserving the metals and minerals, so that those who make mining a permanent pursuit may accumulate around them the comforts and enjoyments of civilized life. Let those who desire to cultivate gardens or farm-lots be accommodated. It will be necessary also to authorize the sale of timber and other materials, for building and other purposes. There may be other suggestions which do not now occur to me, but no doubt will to those who may be charged with the preparation of any measure which may be brought forward on this subject.

I have suggested one ounce or $16 as the price of a permit or license to dig or collect gold for one year. This I regard as about the average value of one day's labor in the mines. This tax on fifty thousand miners, the probable number next summer, will give a revenue of $800,000. On one hundred thousand miners—the probable number in 1851—it will give $1,600,000, besides the per centum on the vein-mines, and the sum received for town lots, timber, &c. &c., which would probably swell the amount to at least $2,000,000. Any variation in the tax imposed will, of course, increase or diminish this estimate.

A suitable amount of the money thus collected should be expended in constructing roads and bridges, to facilitate communication to and through the mining districts.

These facilities will so reduce the cost of living in the mines, that the miners will gain instead of lose by paying the tax. These are accommodations which the miners themselves will never provide, because of the want of concert of action among them sufficient to accomplish such objects, but for which they will willingly pay any moderate contribution. A liberal per centum should be allowed out of this sum, as a school fund, and for the establishment of a university to educate the youth of California. Let it not be considered that this will be doing injustice to the older States of the Union. They will reap a harvest sufficiently rich in their intercourse with their younger sister on the Pacific to justify the most liberal course of policy towards her.

I have given $2,000,000 as the probable revenue for 1851, under the proposed system. This would discharge the interest on the amount stipulated in the treaty to be paid to Mexico for California and New Mexico, provide $300,000 per annum for a school fund, and the necessary improvements in the mining districts, and create

a sinking fund of half a million per annum, to pay the principal of the indemnity to Mexico.

An increase of the number of miners, or of the price of permits, would of course increase the revenue. If the vein mines should be found as extensive and productive as the best informed persons suppose, the right to work them, properly secured by law, and the opportunity thus offered of using machinery to advantage, will justify the collection of a much larger per cent. on their gross product than it is proposed to require from those who labor with their own hands in the use of the simple means now employed in the collection of gold. The amount, therefore, collected from this source may ultimately be as large, perhaps larger, than that for permits.

If revenue is an object, there can be little doubt that, by the adoption of this system, the amount collected in a few years will be larger than the entire district would command in ready money, if offered for sale; and the interests and privileges of those employed in the mines will be secured from the grasping and monopolizing spirit of individual proprietors; California and the whole Union preserved from scenes of anarchy and confusion, if not bloodshed, which must result from a sale of the mining region to speculators, and an attempt to protect them in the enjoyment of their purchases.

The salaries of the commissioner and his assistants may easily be paid out of the amount received, in fixed sums, or in the form of a per centum.

I have proposed to exclude foreigners from the privilege of purchasing permits, and from working as discoverers of purchasers in the vein-mines. My reasons for recommending this policy are, that these mines belong to, and in my judgment should be preserved for the use and benefit of the American people. I mean, of course, all citizens, native and adopted.

During the mining season of 1849, more than fifteen thousand foreigners, mostly Mexicans and Chilenos, came in *armed bands* into the mining district, bidding defiance to all opposition, and finally carrying out of the country some twenty millions of dollars' worth of gold dust, which belonged *by purchase* to the people of the United States. If not excluded by law, they will return and recommence the work of plunder. They may, with as much right, gather the harvest in the valley of the Connecticut, the Ohio, or the Mississippi. No other nation, having the power to protect it, would permit its treasure to be thus carried away. I would not allow them to purchase permits, or work vein-mines, because the contributions proposed to be required are so moderate that they will not cause the slightest inconvenience to the miners, and are not designed as an equivalent for these privileges. Foreigners, therefore, would willingly pay these small sums for permission to collect and carry away millions of dollars in value. The object is not only a suitable revenue, but to preserve for the use of our own fellow-citizens the wealth of that region.

This system of permits will make all who purchase them *police officers, to aid in excluding* from the mines all who are not entitled to, or who do not procure them. This will prevent deserters from the army and navy from being harbored and protected in the mines. Not being allowed to purchase permits, the assistant commissioners, aided by the miners, would soon detect and arrest them. Sailors

belonging to the mercantile marine would be detected in a similar manner, and thus prevented from running away.

The commerce of the country would be protected from the disastrous consequences resulting from the abandonment of ships by their crews, which necessarily imposes a heavy tax on consumers, because merchants, as a measure of self-protection, must charge such losses on their cargoes, and consequently they fall on those who purchase. The army and navy would be saved from demoralization, and prepared for service in case of necessity.

Many of the emigrants to California, especially those from the Western States, will remain and form a resident population; but there will be thousands and tens of thousands of young and middle-aged workingmen, from all parts of the Union, who will resort to the mines for the purpose of obtaining the means to purchase a farm, or establish themselves in some favorite pursuit, and as soon as they have secured a sufficient amount, will return, and their places will be supplied by others who will go and do likewise.

The process has already commenced. Many who went out last spring have returned with an ample reward for their labors and privations. The market in California for the products and manufactures of the other States of the Union, will enhance prices, which, with the gold collected and brought home by laboring people, will diffuse a degree of wealth and comfort hitherto unknown among them.

The *quicksilver mines* of California are believed to be numerous, extensive, and very valuable. There is one near San Jose, which belongs to, or is claimed by, Mr. Forbes, of Tepic, in Mexico. The cinnabar ore, which produces the quicksilver, lies near the surface, is easily procured, and believed to be remarkably productive.

Discoveries of other mines are reported, but no certain information respecting them has been made public. It is, undoubtedly, a fortunate circumstance, that nature, in bestowing on California such vast metallic treasure, has provided, almost in its immediate neighborhood, inexhaustible stores of quicksilver, which is so essential in gold mining.

The policy of Government with respect to these mines of cinnabar should, in my opinion, be quite different from that which I have felt it my duty to suggest for the management of the gold region.

As soon as the necessary explorations can be made, and proper information obtained, it will be well to offer these mines for sale, and commit their development to the hands of private enterprise.

It is believed that there are many extensive beds of silver, iron, and copper ores, in the Territory; but there is no information sufficiently accurate respecting them, to justify any statement of their existence or value.

I have already alluded to the propriety of establishing a mint in California. This is important in many respects. At this time there is not coin in the country to supply a currency. Much difficulty is experienced in procuring enough to pay the duties on imported goods. The common circulating medium is, therefore, gold dust, which is sold at $15 50 to $16 per ounce. In the mines it is frequently sold much lower. The miners, the laboring men, are the sufferers from this state of things.

Those who purchase and ship gold to the Atlantic States make large profits; but *those who dig lose what others make.*

I have estimated that there will be $50,000,000 collected during the current year. At $16 per ounce, that sum will weigh 3,125,000 ounces.

Gold, at the United States mint, is worth $18 per ounce, making a difference in value on that quantity, between San Francisco and New York, of $6,250,000, which would be saved to the miners by the establishment of a mint.

I have also suggested its importance as a means of promoting and increasing our trade with the west coast of Mexico and South America.

It is not doubted that the construction of a railway across the Isthmus of Panama, and perhaps the establishment of other lines of communication between the two oceans, will give to the products and manufactures of the older States of the Union command of the market of California, to the exclusion, in a great degree, of those of the west coast.

A mint will therefore become of the utmost importance to give such marketable value to silver bullion as to enable the merchants of those countries to keep up and increase their intercourse with our principal ports on the Pacific.

The silver bullion shipped to Europe from the west coast of Mexico amounts to more than ten millions of dollars per annum. From the countries on the west coast of South America, probably an equal quantity. That from Mexico goes to pay for European importations into her ports on the Atlantic side.

A market at San Francisco for this bullion will be the means of substituting American and Chinese fabrics for those of European manufacture in all those countries. This will greatly increase the trade between China and California.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) T. BUTLER KING.

To the Hon. JOHN M. CLAYTON,
Secretary of State.

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